

A Show of **Support**

“THAT’S a picture of my daddy,” said 5-year-old Chantel Lillie, as she pointed toward bed sheets printed with photos, signatures and e-mails. The sheets are simple reminders to 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers in Southwest Asia that they are truly missed.

Two simple bed sheets became banners dedicated to deployed soldiers of the 82nd’s 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry Regiment, and 307th Engineer Battalion, both based at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The banners are covered with written messages, copies of e-mails, and photos from wives, families and friends expressing their concerns and support for unit members participating in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

“Come home safe.”

“We miss you.”

“We love you.”

“We’re so proud of you.”



Brandi Hill, whose husband, PFC Jimmie Hill, is in Afghanistan, suggested making the banners after attending a Family Readiness Group meeting. Then she and her neighbors Tiffany Lillie and Natalie Holt designed banners of their own as a show of support for their spouses.

“We wanted to show our husbands we support what they do,” said Hill. She, Lillie and Holt then contacted the wives and families of other unit members and began working on the banners.

“A lot of the wives moved back home when their husbands deployed,” said Hill. “Since they couldn’t be here to sign the banners, we ironed on the e-mail print-outs and photos they sent.”

The banners were soon hanging in Afghanistan and Iraq as daily reminders of what the soldiers are fighting for, and of the support given by families back home.

“We hope this brings a smile to their faces,” said Holt, whose husband, SGT Jimmie Holt, is also in Iraq. “We just want them to know we’re always thinking about them.”

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